Memoir Critique

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| Criteria | Outstanding 10-8 | Satisfactory 8-5 | Needs Improvement 5-1 |
| Organization | • Includes a title that adds meaning and invites the reader into the piece and cleverly hints at the central theme/focus  • Structure includes a “grabber” beginning, well- developed middle, and satisfying ending  • Pacing: Writer effectively controls the pace, “exploding the moment,” using specific narrative actions (movements, gestures, etc.) | • Includes a title that connects to the topic  • Structure includes a beginning, middle, and ending  • Pacing: Writer sometimes controls the pace, shows effort to “explode the moment,” uses some specific narrative actions (movements, gestures, etc.) with some evident gaps | • May not include a title or title is only loosely connected to the central theme  • Missing a satisfactory beginning, middle, and/or ending  • Pacing: Writer does not control the pace well |
| Ideas | • Topic is appropriately focused on a central moment • Includes a thoughtful “so what?” – personal  reflection on the memory’ s significance  • Incorporates several well-developed , specific, and relevant details: naming specifics, visual details of the scene (objects, people), sounds and smells, etc. | • Topic is loosely focused on a central moment • Writer attempts to include a “so what?” or larger  significance, though perhaps not convincingly  • Incorporates a few well-developed details, but leaves gaps, unanswered questions  • Attempts to include a context and setting, though the imagery may not be as clear and vivid as possible | Topic lacks a focus or a central moment  • Lacks personal reflection or “so what?”  • Needs more relevant details and specifics in several places in order to make a connection to the reader  • Lacks context, setting: Where and when this memory takes place is too vague. |
| Voice | Includes interesting descriptions of thoughts and feelings (through internal monologue, for example) that add to the emotional power of the piece and allow the reader to experience the emotions firsthand. | Includes some descriptions of thoughts and feelings, though may leave gaps, unanswered questions about the writer’s state of mind | Does not include description of thoughts and feelings, lacks emotional depth |
| Word Choice | Natural, effective, and appropriate language is used to enhance and clarify meaning. For example, words are specific and accurate, writer uses striking words and phrases, lively verbs, specific nouns and modifiers, precision is obvious. | Functional, with one or two fine moments. Words are adequate and correct in a general sense. For example, writer communicates through familiar words and phrases, with some attempts at colorful language; passive verbs, everyday nouns, mundane modifiers. | Words and phrases are unimaginative and lifeless. For example, words are nonspecific or distracting, many words don’t work, or language is used incorrectly; limited vocabulary, misuse of parts of speech; jargon or clichés, persistent redundancy |
| Conventions | No (or very few) minor errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and usage. | Some errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and usage, though usually does not get in the way of the message. | Not yet under control. Frequent spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and usage errors. |

Comments: Total: / 50